

## Message Text

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44

ACTION EUR-12

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R 261258Z SEP 75

FM AMCONSUL BELFAST

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1040

INFO AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

USNAVCOMMSTA LONDONDERRY

UNCLAS BELFAST 304

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, U.K. (N.I.)

SUBJECT: CONFUSION AT LOYALIST GRASS ROOTS

REF: BELFAST 299, 290 AND PREVIOUS

1. QUESTION OF REASON FOR SEEMING SUDDEN (IF PARTIAL)  
CONVERSION VANGUARD UNIONIST LEADER WILLIAM CRAIG TO RENEGADE  
LOYALIST SPOKESMAN FOR MODERATION AND CONCILIATION CONTINUE  
INTRIGUE OBSERVERS NORTHERN IRELAND POLITICAL SCENE. THEORIES  
RANGE FROM CYNICAL VIEW THAT CRAIG WANTS TO BE IN I-TOLD-YOU-SO  
POSITION AFTER DOOMSDAY, TO ARGUMENTS THAT HE EITHER CONVERTED  
TO REASON BY IMPRESSIVE PERSUASIVE POWERS OF MEMBERS SOCIAL  
DEMOCRATIC AND LABOUR PARTY, OR SIMPLY WANTS GIVE THEM ROPE  
ENOUGH TO HANG THEMSELVES, TO HYPOTHESIS THAT HE AWARE OF GRASS  
ROOTS SENTIMENTS THAT OTHER POLITICIANS ARE MISSING. NORTHERN  
STAFF DUBLIN IRISH TIMES HAS BEEN PURSUING THIS QUESTION AND  
AFTER REPEATED ATTEMPTS RECEIVED PERMISSION COVER A UNIONIST  
CONSTITUENCY MEETING IN AN ORANGE ORDER HALL.

2. IRISH TIMES SEPTEMBER 26 CARRIES ARTICLE REPORTING NORTH  
DOWN CONSTITUENCY MEETING SEPTEMBER 24 ADDRESSED BY UNIONIST  
CONVENTION MEMBERS JOHN TAYLOR, JIM KILFEDDER, GEORGE GREEN  
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AND CLIFFORD SMITH. IN GENERAL ULSTER TERMS KILFEDDER IS

RELATIVE MODERATE, GEORGE GREEN REPRESENTS ONE OF THE MORE RESPECTABLE LOYALIST PARAMILITARY ORGANIZATIONS AND SUPPORT CRAIG "EXPLORATION" STAND, CLIFFORD SMITH IS REPRESENTATIVE OF IAN PAISLEY DEMOCRATIC UNIONIST "NOT-AN-INCH" POSITION AND JOHN TAYLOR IS AN ORANGE ORDER ENIGMA. TO OVERSIMPLIFY, TAYLOR PROBABLY FAVORS CONTINUATION MAJORITY SUPREMACY, IF NECESSARY THROUGH INDEPENDENCE, BUT HE ALSO STRONG ADVOCATE OF ENLISTING CATHOLIC SUPPORT FOR REGIONAL GOVERNMENT - HE FAVORS EXPLORATION OF EAMSNT O OBTAIN THIS SUPPORT - AND FOR HUMANISTIC AS WELL AS BUSINESS REASONS HE DREADS PROSPECT OF CIVIL WAR.

3. IRISH TIMES REPORT OF MEETING INDICATES THAT CONSTITUENTS PRIMARILY CONFUSED ABOUT CRAIG APPROACH FOR FURTHER EXPLORATION OF EMGENCY COLAITION GOVERNMENT POSSIBILITY. REFLECTING IAN PAISLEY THUNDERING THEY UNCLEAR HOW THIS WOULD DIFFER FROM ANATHEMA "POWER SHARING". IT CLEAR THAT NORTH DOWN CONSTITUENTS REMAIN FIRMLY OPPOSED TO GRANTING EXECUTIVE POSITION TO MINORITY AS RIGHT. IT ALSO APPEARS FROM REPORT OF MEETING THAT AT LEAST SOME LOYALIST CONVENTION MEMBERS WILL PURSUE STRONGLY PROPOSAL FOR SUB-CABINET COMMITTEE SYSTEM AS "FAIR" FORMULA FOR INVOLVING MINORITY IN GOVERNMENTAL DECISION MAKING PROCESS.

4. NORTH DOWN IS RELATIVELY PROSPEROUS RELATIVELY TRANQUIL PARTIALLY RURAL AREA. GRASS ROOTS SENTIMENTS THERE ARE NOT NECESSARILY THE SAME AS AMONG EAST BELFAST URBAN PROLETARIAT AND AMONG BELFAST AND LONDONDERRY PARAMILITARIES (DRAWING FROM SAME SOCI-ECONOMIC GROUPS) WHO SUPPORT CRAIG. MUCH FURTHER EXPLORATION IS NEEDED OF CURRENT LOYALIST ATTITUDES AND WHETHER, WHERE AND HOW THEY ARE CHANGING. IT WILL BE INTERESTING TO EXAMI E WHETHER CURRENT DISARRAY IN UNITED ULSTER UNIONIST COALITION IS MERELY REFLECTION OF CLASH BETWEEN STRONG PERSONALITIES, IAN PAISLEY AND WILLIAM CRAIG, OR WHETHER THERE IS UNDERLYING FUNDAMENTAL SHIFT AND POLARIZATION BY CLASS AND ON GEOGRAPHIC LINESWM  
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